

Message Text

SECRET

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S E C R E T CAIRO 10136

EXDIS (DISTRIBUTE AS NODIS)

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS EG US IT
SUBJECT: MIG-21 MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

REF: (A) CAIRO 9210, (B) CAIRO 7405

1. REFTEL REPORTED THE TWO STORIES EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED, ONE FROM MINWAR GAMASY THAT THE BRITISH ARE THE WINNERS OF THE CONTRACT TO OVERHAUL BOTH MIG-21 ENGINES AND AIRFRAMES, AND THE OTHER STORY FROM THE EGYPTIAN AIR FORCE THAT WHILE THE ENGINE BUSINESS HAS GONE TO ROLLS ROYCE, THE AIRFRAME BUSINESS IS STILL AN OPEN ISSUE.

2. AIRA MET 5 APRIL WITH OMAR FARAHAT, TECHNICAL DIRECTOR FOR THE ARAB ORGANIZATION FOR INDUSTRIALIZATION (AOI), TO DETERMINE POSSIBLE AOI ROLE IN MIG-21 UPKEEP AND LEARNED THAT BOTH STORIES ARE APPARENTLY TRUE.

3. ACCORDING TO FARAHAT, GAMASY'S POSITION WAS THAT ONE COMPANY SHOULD TAKE TOTAL RESPONSIBILITY, ENGINES, AIRFRAMES, AUXILIARIES, ...EVERYTHING. THE AIR FORCE AND AOI PERSUADED HIM THAT WAS NOT A REALISTIC APPROACH AND THE JOB WAS BROKEN INTO TWO PARTS BUT WITHIN A SINGLE COUNTRY. ROLLS HAS A SIGNED CONTRACT FOR THE ENGINES. FOR THE

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REMAINDER THERE IS AS YET NO CONTRACT.

4. THE EGYPTIAN AIR FORCE AT SOME POINT ASKED AOI TO BID ON THE MAINTENANCE AND OVERHAUL JOB. ACCORDING TO FARAHAT THE AOI REPLIED, "WHAT JOB?". FROM THERE THE DIALOGUE WAS SIMILAR TO THAT AERITALIA/LOCKHEED HAD BEEN THROUGH. THE EAF THEN BEGAN TO GET THE MESSAGE THAT IF THEY WANTED A

REASONABLE PROPOSAL, THEY HAD TO DEFINE THE PROBLEM BETTER.

5. THE CURRENT SITUATION IS THAT THE BRITISH (PRESUMABLY BRITISH AEROSPACE) ARE DOING A FOUR- OR FIVE-MONTH STUDY TO IDENTIFY WHAT IS AVAILABLE IN TERMS OF DOCUMENTATION, SPARES, SPACE, EQUIPMENT, ETC., AND WHAT IS REQUIRED IN REENGINEERING, MANUFACTURING, SCHEDULE, AND MAN HOURS. THEN AOI WILL DETERMINE WHAT PART THEY CAN DO IN THEIR FACILITIES. FINALLY, BA WILL MAKE AN OFFER ON THE REMAINDER.

6. ABOVE INFORMATION TIES THE GAMASY AND AIR FORCE STORIES TOGETHER. WHILE NO AIRFRAME CONTRACT HAS YET BEEN SIGNED, BA IS WORKING TOWARD THAT END. THE LOGIC IN THIS APPROACH IS CLEAR ENOUGH. HOWEVER, BEFORE AIRPLANES ARE OVERHAULED ANOTHER YEAR WILL HAVE SLIPPED AWAY AND THE AVAILABILITY OF MIG-21S WILL BECOME MORE CRITICAL THAN EVER. EILTS

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